

REMARKS

SPECIFICATION

The specification has been objected to because of informality in the abstract. The amendment made herein to the abstract obviates the objection.

CLAIMS OBJECTIONS

Claims 1, 10, 16 and 17 are objected to because of various informalities. The amendments to the claims made herein obviate these objections and the amendments made in light of the Examiner's objections do not alter the scope of the claims and they are entitled to their full scope both literally and under the doctrine of equivalence as these amendments in light of the claims objections mainly correct typographical errors. Applicant respectfully request that the claim objections be removed in view of the foregoing amendments.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 7, 9, 11 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,581,593 to Rubin et al. ("Rubin"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

A section 102 rejection is proper only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found – i.e., the prior art must teach every aspect of the claim. See *Verdegall Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 918 F.2d 628,631 (Fed. Cir. 1987); *see also* MPEP § 2131. Claim 1 and its dependent claims 7 and 9 recite a combination having among other things "a housing having a substantially hexagonal outer cross-section." Applicant respectfully submits that Rubin at least does not teach or suggest this aspect of the claim.

For example, FIG. 1 of Rubin is a perspective view of the apparatus described in the Rubin patent. No hexagonal outer cross-section is shown. Furthermore, a dependent claim that has since been cancelled claimed a hexagonal outer cross-section, and in this dependent claim was not rejected by the examiner in view of Rubin. Thus, Rubin does not teach or suggest this aspect of the claim. For at least this reason, applicant's request that the section 102 rejection of claims 1, 7 and 9 in view of Rubin be withdrawn.

Claims 11 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Rubin *et al.* Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Claim 11 and thus its dependent claim 16 recite a combination including among other things "means for housing a pipe configured to allow an end of a first pipe to slide through it, the means for housing having a substantially hexagonal outer-cross section." As recited above, Rubin does not teach or suggest at least this aspect of the claim. Therefore applicant respectfully request that the rejection of claim 11 as dependent claim 16 as being anticipated by Rubin *et al.* be removed.

Claims 1-6, 8, 10-15, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,251,715 to Parker ("Parker"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-6, 8 and 10 recite a combination having among other things "a second chamber contained within the housing and configured to allow an end of a pipe to slide through it and to provide a bridge for material flowing from the pipe to a second pipe when an end of the pipe does not contact the end of the second pipe." Applicant respectfully requests that Parker does not teach at least this aspect of the claim. For example, FIGS. 1-4 of Parker indicate the two pipe ends contacting each other and no chamber acting as a bridge for material flowing from one pipe to the other. For at least this reason, applicant requests that the

102 rejection of claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-6, 8 and 10 as being anticipated by Parker be removed.

Claims 11-15 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Parker. However, applicant respectfully asserts that Parker does not teach or suggest the combination recited by claim 11 and its dependent claim. For example, claim 11, recites the combination having among other things “means for attaching an end of a second pipe and means for bridging fluid flowing from the pipe to the second pipe when an end of the pipe does not contact an end of a second pipe. As recited above, Parker does not teach at least this aspect of the claim. Therefore, applicants respectfully request that this § 102 rejection of claims 11 and its dependent claims 12-15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Parker be removed.

In the Office Action and claims 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Berger for reasons set forth in page 6 of the Office Action. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Applicant respectfully asserts that Berger does not teach or suggest a method as recited by claim 18 and its dependent claims 19-20. For example, claim 18 and its dependent claims 19 and 20 recite a method including among other things “bridging material carried by the pipe with the slip joint adapter between the two non-contacting pipe ends. Berger does not teach at least this aspect of the claim as shown in the figures and discussed in column 6, lines 11-13 and column 7, lines 9-12. The pipe ends in the Berger joint do contact, when the joint is installed therefore there is no teaching or suggestion of the method described in claim 18 and its

independent claims 19 and 20. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Berger be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests objections and rejections be removed and the pending claims allowed. If, for any reason, the Examiner disagrees, please call the undersigned attorney at 202-861-1792 in an effort to resolve any matter still outstanding before issuing another action. The undersigned attorney is confident that any issue which might remain can readily be worked out by telephone.

In the event this paper is not time filed, Applicant petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2036.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER & HOSTETLER LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Alan Larson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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